

# The SKY PILOT

By RALPH CONNOR

Author of

"The Man From Glengarry"  
"Glengarry School Days" and "Black Rock"

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Of course Hi Kendal and his friend Bronco Hill had no opinion one way or the other. The church could hardly affect them even remotely. A dozen years' stay in Montana had proved sufficient clearness to them that a church was a luxury of civilization the west might well do without.

Outside the Company of the Noble Seven there was only one whose opinion had value in Swan Creek, and that was the Old Timer. The Company had sought to bring him in by making him an honorary member, but he refused to be drawn from his home far up among the hills, where he lived with his little girl Gwen and her old half-breed nurse, Ponka. The approach of the church he seemed to resent as a personal injury. It represented to him that civilization from which he had fled fifteen years ago with his wife and baby girl, and when, five years later, he laid his wife in the lonely grave that could be seen on the shaded knoll just fronting his cabin door the last link to his past was broken. From all that suggested the great world beyond the run of the prairie he shrank as one shrinks from a sudden throb upon an old wound.

"I guess I'll have to move back," he said to me gloomily.

"Why?" I said in surprise, thinking of his grazing range, which was ample for his herd.

"This blank Sky Pilot." He never swore except when unusually moved.

"Sky Pilot?" I inquired.

He nodded and silently pointed to the notice.

"Oh, well, he won't hurt you, will he?"

"Can't stand it," he answered savagely; "must get away."

"What about Gwen?" I ventured, for she was the light of his eyes. "Pity to stop her studies." I was giving her weekly lessons at the old man's ranch.

"Dunno. Ain't figured out yet about that baby." She was still his baby. "Guess she's all she wants for the foothills, anyway. What's the use?" he added bitterly, talking to himself after the manner of men who live much alone.

I waited for a moment, then said, "Well, I wouldn't hurry about doing anything," knowing well that the one thing an old timer hates to do is to make any change in his mode of life. "Maybe he won't stay."

He caught at this eagerly. "That's so! There ain't much to keep him, anyway." And he rode off to his lonely ranch far up in the hills.

I looked after the swaying figure and tried to picture his past, with its tragedy; then I found myself wondering how he would end and what would come to his little girl, and I made up my mind that if the missionary were the right sort his coming might not be a bad thing for the Old Timer and perhaps for more than him.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PILOT'S MEASURE.

IT was Hi Kendal that announced the arrival of the missionary. I was standing at the door of my school, watching the children ride off home on their ponies, when Hi came loping along on his bronco in the loose jointed cowboy style.

"Well," he drawled out, bringing his bronco to a dead stop in a single bound, "he's lit."

"Lit? Where? What?" said I, looking round for an eagle or some other flying thing.

"Your blanked Sky Pilot, and he's a beauty, a pretty kid—looks too tender for this climate. Better not let him out on the range." Hi was quite disgusted evidently.

"What's the matter with him, Hi?"

"Why, he ain't no parson! I don't go much on parsons, but when I call for one I don't want no bantam chicken. No, sirree, horse. I don't want no blankety-blank pink and white complected nursery kid foolin' round my graveyard. If you're goin' to bring along a parson, why, bring him with his eyeteeth cut and his tail feathers on."

That Hi was deeply disappointed was quite clear from the selection of the profanity with which he adorned this lengthy address. It was never the extent of his profanity, but the choice.

That indicated Hi's interest in any subject.

Altogether the outlook for the missionary was not encouraging. With the single exception of the Maids, who really counted for little, nobody wanted him. To most of the reckless young bloods of the Company of the Noble Seven his presence was an offense, to others simply a nuisance, while the Old Timer regarded his advent with something like dismay, and now Hi's impression of his personal appearance was not cheering.

My first sight of him did not reassure me. He was very slight, very young, very innocent, with a face that might do for an angel, except for the touch of humor in it, but which seemed strangely out of place among the rough, hard faces that were to be seen in the Swan Creek country. It was not a weak face,

however. The forehead was high and square, the mouth firm, and the eyes were luminous, of some dark color—violet, if there is such a color in eyes—dreamy or sparkling, according to his mood; eyes for which a woman might find use, but which in a missionary's head appeared to me one of those extraordinary wastes of which nature is sometimes guilty.

He was gazing far away into space infinitely beyond the foothills and the blue line of the mountains behind them. He turned to me as I drew near with eyes alight and face glowing.

"It is glorious!" he almost panted. "You see this every day!" Then, recalling himself, he came eagerly toward me, stretching out his hand. "You are the schoolmaster, I know. Do you know, it's a great thing! I wanted to be one, but I never could get the boys on. They always got me telling them tales. I was awfully disappointed. I am trying the next best thing. You see, I won't have to keep order, but I don't think I can preach very well. I am going to visit your school. Have you many scholars? Do you know, I think it's splendid! I wish I could do it."

I had intended to be somewhat stiff with him, but his evident admiration of me made me quite forget this laudable intention, and as he talked on without waiting for an answer his enthusiasm, his deference to my opinion, his charm of manner, his beautiful face, his luminous eyes, made him perfectly irresistible, and before I was aware I was listening to his plans for working his mission with eager interest. So eager was my interest, indeed, that before I was aware I found myself asking him to tea with me in my shack. But he declined, saying:

"I'd like to awfully; but, do you know, I think Latour expects me."

This consideration of Latour's feelings almost upset me.

"You come with me," he added, and I went.

Latour welcomed us with his grim old face wreathed in unusual smiles. The Pilot has been talking to him too. "I've got it, Latour!" he cried out as he entered. "Here you are." And he broke into the beautiful French Canadian chanson "A la Claire Fontaine," to the old half-breed's almost fearful delight.

"Do you know," he went on, "I heard that first down the Mattawa," and away he went into a story of an experience with French Canadian ruffians, mixing up his French and English in so charming a manner that Latour, who in his younger days long ago had been a shantymen himself, could hardly know whether he was standing on his head or on his heels.

After tea I proposed a ride out to see the sunset from the nearest rising ground. Latour, with unexampled generosity, offered his own cayuse, Louis.

"I can't ride well," protested the Pilot.

"Ah, dat's good ponce, Louis," urged Latour. "He's quiet lak wan leetle



He came eagerly toward me, mouse; he's ride lak—what you call?—wan horse on de rock." Under which persuasion the pony was accepted.

That evening I saw the Swan Creek country with new eyes—through the luminous eyes of the Pilot. We rode up the trail by the side of the Swan till we came to the coulee mouth, dark and full of mystery.

"Come on," I said, "we must get to the top for the sunset."

He looked lingeringly into the deep shadows and asked, "Anything live down there?"

"Coyotes and wolves and ghosts."

"Ghosts?" he asked delightedly. "Do you know, I was sure there were, and I'm quite sure I shall see them."

Then we took the Porcupine trail and climbed for about two miles the gentle slope to the top of the first rising ground. There we stayed and watched the sun take his slightly plunging into the sea of mountains, now dimly visible. Behind us stretched the

prairie, sweeping out level to the sky and cut by the winding coulee of the Swan. Great long shadows from the hills were lying upon its yellow face, and far at the distant edge the gray haze was deepening into purple. Before us lay the hills, softly curving like the shoulders of great sleeping monsters, their tops still bright, but the separating valleys full of shadow. And there, far beyond them, up against the sky, was the line of the mountains—blue, purple and gold, according as the light fell upon them.

The sun had taken his plunge, but he had left behind him the robes of saffron and gold. We stood long without a word or movement, filling our hearts with the silence and the beauty, till the gold in the west began to grow dim. High above all the night was stretching her star pierced, blue canopy and drawing slowly up from the east over the prairie and over the sleeping hills the soft folds of a purple haze. The great silence of the dying day had fallen upon the world and held us fast.

"Listen," he said in a low tone, pointing to the hills. "Can't you hear them breathe?" And, looking at their curving shoulders, I fancied I could see them slowly heaving as if in heavy sleep, and I was quite sure I could hear them breathe. I was under the spell of his voice and his eyes, and nature was all living to me then.

We rode back to the Stopping Place in silence, except for a word of mine now and then which he heeded not, and, with hardly a good night, he left me at the door. I turned away feeling as if I had been in a strange country and among strange people.

How would he do with the Swan Creek folk? Could he make them see the hills breathe. Would they feel as I felt under his voice and eyes? What a curious mixture he was! I was doubtful about his first Sunday, and was surprised to find all my indifference as to his success or failure gone. It was a pity about the baseball match. I would speak to some of the men about it tomorrow.

Hi might be disappointed in his appearance, but as I turned into my shack and thought over my last two hours with the Pilot and how he had "got" old Latour and myself I began to think that Hi might be mistaken in his measure of the Pilot.

To be continued.

## Beware of Ointments for Catarrh that Contain Mercury

as mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is ten fold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O., contains no mercury, and is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co. Testimonials free.

Sold by Druggists. Price, 75c, per bottle. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

The American Federation of Labor is organizing farm laborers' unions in all parts of the United States and has recently extended its efforts to Porto Rico. These unions will seek to regulate hours, wages and conditions of labor and, if the movement shall be permanent and successful will lead to important changes in all the industries connected with agriculture. The farmers of this section are naturally interested in such questions and desirous of securing information on the subject as well as to know how they will be affected by the change. The Farmer and Stockman, Kansas City, Mo., will publish in an early issue an article on this general subject, which every farmer in Saline county should read and digest, as we have many valuable articles on every other phase of farm life and work which are constantly appearing in The Farmer and Stockman. We have made arrangements for a very low clubbing rate for this excellent paper. The next time you are in town, call at the Republican office and let us arrange to send you both papers for a year.

## Tried to Wreck Hummer.

Some tramps tried to wreck the Hummer near Gilliam about a week ago by placing ties across the track, but fortunately no serious damage was done, as the ties were discovered in time to slack the speed of the train. The attempt was repeated the same night on train 83 with similar results.

## Partnership Dissolved

Trigg & Fisher, druggists, have dissolved partnership. A. J. Trigg retiring and Thos. Fisher continuing the business.

## From Our Exchanges

Philip Theiss was here this week looking for a man to run his coal mine near New Frankfort. Phil is again in the Blacksmith business in Gilliam—Jim Holmden began work on the Presbyterian manse this week and it is hoped he will rush the work so the minister can give a 4th of July reception in it.—Frank Slusher has returned from Mt. Leonard and is able to be at his work, after a long and severe illness.—H. L. Blosser opened up his new livery stable this week and began hiring out rigs. H. L. has a brand new lot of buggies, surreys and a splendid lot of driving horses, and is ready to accommodate every person who comes to him.—Malta Bend Qui Vive.

Born April 10th, to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Blair a boy.—Mrs. Lewis Gray and children came up from Marshall Thursday and visited her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Swift, for several days.—George Wessendorf came up from Blackwater Friday to visit his parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Wessendorf. Geo. informed us that he had sold his store at Blackwater but had not yet made up his mind what he would do.—The trustees of the town Blackburn met Thursday night and organized by electing the following officers: Jas. H. Neal, Chairman, H. J. Pelot, Clerk, F. Beckmann, Treasurer; E. L. Freerking, Collector; L. Sunderbrink, Street Commissioner.—Blackburn Record.

Born to Walter Brown and wife, on Tuesday night of April 10th, 1906, a daughter.—T. R. Edmonds has out bills for a public sale of horses and mares, at his farm, 5 miles west of town on Saturday, April 20th.—Jas. Monroe Davis has been appointed rural mail carrier for Route No 3, to succeed F. C. Tillotson, resigned. His examination grade was 98½. Chas. B. Davis will be his substitute.—W. F. Zimmerman has refused \$1,000 profit on the land he lately purchased in North Texas. He has rented his farm, but as yet he has not decided whether he will move to Texas this spring.—Nelson Time Card.

The Ladies Aid of the Christian Church will hold a "Seven Day's Wonder" in the Hookery building on Friday afternoon and evening and Saturday afternoon, April 20th and 21st. Everybody invited.—Miss Bee O'Hearn left Wednesday for Little Rock, Arkansas, where she will spend the summer with her sister, Mrs. W. J. Bailey.—Lloyd Kemper, although considerably disabled, was in town Saturday to cast his vote. His disability was occasioned by a hog falling against his leg, while he was attempting to put a ring in its nose.—Slater Rustler.

It would be especially gratifying to us to see the more than 5000 Democratic voters of Saline county enrolled and exercising their greatest civil right—the right of suffrage. Why it is that so many true and loyal Democrats will treat with indifference this greatest and most important privilege is a mystery yet unsolved. This indifference is a menace to the party and it is

# CASTORIA

The Kind You Have Always Bought, and which has been in use for over 30 years, has borne the signature of and has been made under his personal supervision since its infancy. Allow no one to deceive you in this. All Counterfeits, Imitations and "Just-as-good" are but experiments that trifle with and endanger the health of Infants and Children—Experience against Experiment.

## What is CASTORIA

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Foreign trips are the "real thing," not only because they show you "something different," but because the change in climate, customs, and even down to the language, brings that complete rest and relaxation which constitute

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That's why Mexico is such a delight, and memories linger long and something to talk about remains in stock for years to come. CAN WE INTEREST YOU IN A

## \$52.05 Round Trip Rate

by the CHICAGO & ALTON, APRIL 25 to MAY 5, 1906. The Return Limit is way into the summer, so one can casually visit historic spots, see the grand mountains, and get full benefit of this fine trip.

MR. O. E. HAWTHORNE, Ticket Agent C. & A.

at Marshall, will furnish you with complete particulars, but you must do your part by calling upon or writing to him.

growing more and more noticeable each campaign year.—Miami News.

(Yes, and as the number of "true and loyal" decreases from year to year, this indifference on the part of Democrats will grow more and more noticeable)—Editor.

## At Nelson Friday

The Rahm family, of Higginsville, will give a concert at Nelson Friday night at the opera house. The editor has heard them play and promises that all who go will be well repaid. We have known the Rahm family for 25 years—when it consisted of one lone-some young man. Mr. Rahm is a traveling salesman of Higginsville and has a very interesting and intelligent family.

## CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

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## Fifth Sunday Convention

of the Saline Baptist Association will be held at the Nelson church on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 27, 28, and 29. A splendid program has been arranged and a helpful meeting may be expected.

## Opera House Safe

The committee appointed by the city council to examine the opera house reported it absolutely safe, and "believe it to be as substantial as any building in the city."

## A Bargain

For Sale—3 room house, barn smoke-house, cellar, garden etc., for \$500. Rents for \$5 per month.

5-4 Mitchell & Hilburn.

(First insertion April 13) NOTICE OF FINAL SETTLEMENT. Notice is hereby given to all creditors and others interested in the estate of Leola Mullins, deceased, that we, W. R. Mullins and Joe Mullins, executors of said estate, intend to make final settlement thereof at the next term of the Probate Court of Saline county, to be held at the Court House in said county, on the first Monday of June, 1906. W. R. MULLINS, JOE MULLINS, Executors.